

WE CLAIM:

1. A method of monitoring a game of chance that contains a repetitive action, the method comprising:

obtaining a stream of digital image data that includes a plurality of the repetitive actions stored thereon relating to the game of chance; and

automatically parsing the stream of digital image data to count the plurality of repetitive actions, the count obtained providing an indicator usable to monitor the game of chance.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of automatically parsing the stream performs pattern recognition on fixed locations.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of obtaining the stream of digital image data uses a video camera fixed in position that does not zoom.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the repetitive action includes an action of a dealer.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the repetitive action of the dealer corresponds to an area of the table where the dealer deals.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the repetitive action includes an action of a player.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein the repetitive action of the player corresponds to an area of the table where the player bets.

8. The method of claim 6, wherein the repetitive action of the player corresponds to an area of the table where the player plays.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the repetitive action includes actions of both a dealer and a player.

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10. The method of claim 1, wherein the repetitive action includes an action of an object.
11. The method of claim 10, wherein the repetitive action of the object a landing of a marble in a slot of a wheel in a game of roulette.
12. The method of claim 11 further including the step of comparing a slot where the marble lands with a placement of a marker on a table position.
13. The method of claim 12 further including the step of triggering an event alarm if the slot where the marble landed and the table position where the marker was placed do not correspond to each other.
14. The method of claim 10 the repetitive action of the object is the marble being located at an inner edge portion of a wheel in a game of roulette.
15. The method of claim 1, wherein the game of chance is a card game.
16. The method of claim 15, wherein the repetitive action is an absence of cards at a predetermined location of a table.
17. The method of claim 15, wherein the repetitive action is an existence of objects at a predetermined location of a table.
18. The method of claim 15, wherein the card game is one of blackjack, pai-gow, 3 card poker, and baccarat..
20. The method of claim 15, further including the step of comparing a color of a card against a color of a deck being dealt to assist in ensuring that the card is a legitimate card.

21. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of automatically parsing uses a mask to compare a scene corresponding to a location on a frame with the mask.
22. The method of claim 20, wherein the scene corresponds to an area of a table where cards are placed.
23. The method of claim 20, wherein the scene corresponds to an area of a table where bets are placed.
24. A method of monitoring a repetitive action, the method comprising:  
obtaining a stream of digital image data that includes a plurality of the repetitive actions stored thereon; and  
automatically parsing the stream of digital image data to count the plurality of repetitive actions, the count obtained providing an indicator usable to monitor the repetitive action.
25. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of automatically parsing the stream performs pattern recognition on fixed locations of frames.
26. The method of claim 23 wherein the stream of digital image data includes a plurality of frames, and a portion of each frame is compared to a mask.
27. The method of claim 23 wherein adjacent frames that both contain the portion that corresponds to the mask do not indicate a repetitive action.
28. A method of counting a plurality of objects comprising:  
obtaining a stream of digital image data that includes therein a repetitive sequence that exists with respect to the plurality of objects; and  
automatically parsing the stream of digital image data to count the repetitive sequence that exists; and

using the counted repetitive sequence that exists to estimate a number of the plurality of objects.

29. The method of claim 27, wherein the plurality of objects include a plurality of vertically stacked chips separated by a spacer at repetitive intervals and the step of automatically parsing counts each different spacer.

30. The method of claim 27 wherein the plurality of objects include a plurality of object locations, wherein a predetermined value amount is placed at each object location, and wherein the step of automatically parsing counts each placement of another predetermined value amount at another sequential object location.

31. The method of claim 30 further including the step of triggering an event alarm if the step of automatically parsing detects placement of a value amount at a location that does not correspond to the next sequential object location.

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